A Synopsis

on

An Exploration of Gender in the Novels of Manju Kapur: A Study

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❖ Introduction:

Manju Kapur (born in Amritsar, India) is an Indian novelist. Like Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy, Gita Hariharan, Anita Nair, Shobha De, Manju Kapur is one of the growing Indian woman writers in English who lives and writes in India itself. She is a professor of English at Miranda House, Delhi University. Her first novel, "*Difficult Daughters"*, won the 1999 Commonwealth Prize for Best First Book Europe and South Asia Section. Since publication of her first novel, *Difficult Daughters* (1998), Manju Kapur has established herself as a chronicler of middle-class Indian manners, even earning comparison with Jane Austen for her sharp-eyed, finely turned portraits of unremarkable lives. '*A Married Women'* (2002), is her second novel.

Her third novel, *Home* was short listed for the Hutch Cross Word book award in 2006. The novel describes the story of an ordinary middle class joint family, settled in Delhi.

The writing of Manju Kapur constitute a discourse that does not simply in act subverting the patriarchal notions governing a woman's life but also provides a deep insight into man-woman relationship. She offers a close view on the man-woman relationship enmeshed in forced arranged marriages, love affairs that are not accepted by the society, infidelity, sexual dysfunction adoption, divorced etc.

The gender relation in a patriarchal society through man-woman relationship is one of the central thrust in the novels of Manju Kapur. The *Immigrants* (2009) was short listed for the DSC prize for South Asian literature, which delves deep on human relation that it can almost be read as psychological documents presenting the intricacies of human bounce. Her next novel *Custody* (2011) is about matrimony at its most intolerable situation followed by the emotional falls out of a break up on one wealthy extended Delhi family. Her latest novel *Brother* (2016) much like the previous one, highlights the lives of women in multiple locations, rural, urban, domestic, public offering for view the happenings within the home with the same urgency as the goings in the world.

Society is a web of human relationships networking with each other to make the world a better and healthier place to live in. Human beings, when they live in society, have to depend on one another for their livelihood and Relationships is a social recognition which results due to interaction between various individuals and forms the basis of human relationships. Relationships are cultural symbol of the society and present themselves in various forms.

They can be broadly classified into two types. First is Biological in which we see mother, father, husband, wife, sister and brother etc. Cultural in which comes friendship, companionship, fellowship. Human relationship whether Biological or Cultural important for a person in the society. Human relationship in general plays a vital role in the progress and well being of mankind and also in enriching and strengthening the bonds.

❖ The Title of the Research Study:

Manju Kapur is a critically acclaimed Indian novelist who has six novels to her credit. The topic of the present study is focused on man to woman, man to man, woman to woman relationship under the Biological and Cultural context in the novels of Manju Kapur. As, Human relationships are the most dominant themes of her novels, the researcher intends to focus on it. Hence, the proposed title of the present study is—

"**An Exploration of Gender in the Novels of Manju Kapur: A Study**".

❖ The Hypothesis and Present Need for the Research:

Many writers have written on relationships, yet much attention is still required from female perspectives. Keeping in this mind the researchers comes to the hypothesis that it will be interesting to note the biological and cultural human relationships in the novels of Manju Kapur. The emergence of new women in the realm of social, economic, cultural, racial aspects seem to be an crucial aspect of Manju Kapur's novels. Relationships, biological or cultural (manmade) are inseparable part of human life right from one's birth to his death.

❖ Aims & objectives:

Literature is the intellectual mirror that reflects human responses towards nature, society and life. Because of that, it becomes so valuable that a researcher gets a chance to participate in intellectual quest in the writings of eminent writers like Manju Kapur.

The purpose of the present study is

1. To study the human relationships on biological basis.
2. To study the human relationships on Cultural basis (including social, political, economic, cultural, religious, psychological basis).
3. To bring the clarity and its conception of human relationship and the nature of female character in novels of Manju Kapur.
4. To refine the understanding of Human relationship.
5. To trace the causes and effects of society on female life and suggest remedy over it.

The researcher focuses on Manju Kapur's novels and how she depicts the female character affected by socio cultural, religious aspects real life in her novels. This work is hopefully expected to be a useful literary guide for Indian students.

❖ Nature & Scope of the Study: The Conceptual Framework:

The study throws light on human relationship. It can be applied to on international level to any text because Manju Kapur's works encourage understanding the psyche of a woman, who is caught in the web of relationships partly made by her, and partly made for her by her family and society.

The novels of Manju Kapur have made an important contribution in Indian literature, by portraying the confident, ambitious, enterprising and individual women through her novels who demand attention, equality and peace. This proposed research study deals with only novels written by Manju Kapur.

❖ The Research Design and Methodology:

The tentative research design i.e. general chapter scheme of the research study is as follows:

1. Chapter I: Introduction
2. Chapter II: Contribution of Manju Kapur to Indian novels in English
3. Chapter III: Human Relationships in Biological context in the novels of Manju Kapur.
4. Chapter IV: Human Relationships in Cultural context in the novels of Manju Kapur.
5. Chapter V: Conclusion

   Bibliography

Methodology:

The research intends to follow descriptive, exploratory. Interpretative and analytical methods supported by inductive and deductive modes of thinking and critical opinions of the critics. The procedure adopted in the content analysis and description is of both intra-textual and inter-textual nature. By following the method of close textual comments, this study investigates the types of view the individual writer projected in her novels.

Since the topic is related to literature, particularly the novels, it reflects the society, its members and tradition. The novels of Manju Kapur are no exception to it. Selected novels will be critically evaluated, interpreted and analysed with critical opinion of the early research studies. Manju Kapur's heroine is mentally progressive in real sense of the world.

❖ Literature Review:

The novels of Manju Kapur are mostly looked at from the lens of feminism and the honest representation of the sentiments of men and women in her novels is not fully explored. Manju Kapur's female protagonists are mostly educated. The beauty of her novels certainly lies in her unique presentation in which she seems to present conflicting situation in which woman are in search of their own self-made identity and location. Hopefully, the research study will be a great contribution to depict multiple faces, roles played by women through the novels of Manju Kapur.

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